

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

September 2007, Volume 34, No. 9

DONATION \$1

The corporations vs. public education



Children on the playground at Friends School in Detroit.

PHOTO/JIM WEST

The education system must be public and serve the people

SEE PAGE THREE

Also in this issue:

6-7 San Francisco International Poetry Festival

Housing crisis reveals a system on a path to destruction

The public is increasingly anxious over the growing severity of the housing crisis and with good reason. Foreclosures are up 62 percent from 2006 and are projected to reach 2 million by the end of this year. Housing prices have fallen for consecutive years for the first time since the Great Depression.

In August, the crisis took a dramatic turn for the worse. The rise in mortgage loan defaults and foreclosures spread like wild fire beyond the "subprime" to the prime mortgage market and from there into the broader US and world economy. This has led to a full blown financial panic as banks and other lenders frantically attempt to unload loans losing value onto the market before they become worthless. To stop the bleeding and "restore confidence," the US Federal Reserve and other central banks throughout the world were forced to pump hundreds of billions of dollars into a US and world financial system teetering on the brink of collapse.

For millions of home owners, especially those in the bottom 40 percent of the income ladder, the situation is po-

The rise in mortgage loan defaults and foreclosures spread like wildfire...into the broader U.S. and world economy.

tentially catastrophic. The developing "credit crunch" and rapid slide in property values means that many will not be able to meet escalating mortgage payments or be able to buy time by borrowing against equity in their home. Saddled with a high interest debt burden (mortgage, refinance, credit card, student loans, etc.) consuming 50, 80, even 110 percent of their wages, and denied

relief by the bankruptcy laws, increasing numbers of workers are doomed to a life of debt servitude as they struggle to hold on to their homes. Hundreds of thousands will descend into the ranks of the homeless as victims of foreclosure.

Numerous causes have been advanced to account for the housing crisis, ranging from uninformed home buyers being victimized by unscrupulous brokers, to the low interest rate policies of the US Federal Reserve making it easy for people to buy housing at inflated prices.

None of these explanations expose the root cause of the problem. The housing crisis is a symptom of the deepening crisis of the capitalist economic system. This crisis, caused by the

ONE WORLD IS ENOUGH FOR...



The Richest 1% Own 40% of the Planet's Wealth.

HICK

introduction of electronic technology into the economy, is destroying the very foundation of capitalism as workers who use their wages to buy houses and other necessities of life are displaced by robots that don't eat and do not require shelter.

The growth of production based on electronics is hollowing out society's middle as millions lose their jobs, or are forced into low-paying part-time work incapable of sustaining life. The result is the increasing polarization of society: at one end a rapidly expanding majority is mired in permanent poverty, while at the other extreme an ever smaller minority wallows in an historic accumulation of wealth.

The growing polarization engendered by the crisis is awakening a sleeping giant. A random scan of internet blogs and talk radio across the political spectrum reveals that the housing crisis is spawning a scathing critique of the system. Many are blaming the "system" for its failure to provide them with protection and relief.

This emergent "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore" consciousness must be elevated to the understanding that a system on the path of self destruction cannot be fixed or reformed — it must be replaced. The future of humankind and the planet depends on the working class grasping this truth and acting upon it.

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PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

The People's Tribune is devoted to the proposition that an economic system that can't or won't feed, clothe and house its people ought to be and will be changed. To that end, this paper is a tribune of the people. It is the voice of millions struggling for survival. It strives to educate politically those millions on the basis of their own experience. It is a tribune to bring them together, to create a vision of a better world, and a strategy to achieve it.

We find ourselves at a historic moment as labor-replacing technology leads us on a path toward the decisive reconstruction of society. Who will win — the capitalists or the growing mass of poor — will depend on winning the hearts and minds of the people to create a society whose fruits benefit all.

We offer our pages as a vehicle for the new ideas rooted in our reality, and to be the voice of those who seek to raise the consciousness of society. Let us gather our collective experience, intelligence and commitment to bring forth a vision that changes America into a society "by the people, of the people, for the people."

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE EDITORIAL POLICY:

Articles that are unsigned, such as the front page and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. Bylined articles reflect the views of the authors, and may or may not reflect the views of the editorial board.

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 600 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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The corporations vs. public education

The education system must be public and serve the people

COVER STORY

Two decades ago, corporate think tanks unveiled a vision of how to reorganize human society, based on capitalist control of the new electronic technology in the new global marketplace. The experts realized that computer-assisted production would be vastly more productive than before. This meant there would be more workers than jobs. They developed the “just-in-time” concept of contingent workers who work from job to job, for low wages, and are often not working at all.

Next, they transformed various types of public, national and social property into corporate property. Increasingly, corporations began to run government functions directly, not for the public, but to make a profit and protect their interests.

Two days after 911, George Bush announced that his program for public education was still on the table. We have come to see what this means: high-stakes testing, closing schools, and privatization. From Oakland, California, to Washington, D.C., from St. Louis and Pittsburg to New Orleans, entire school districts are now run by corporate hacks. Last Fall, a private commission financed by Bill Gates called for extending this concept to all of society by turning public schools into “contract schools.” They have BIG plans! They intend to privatize all public schools.

When public services are turned over to the market, they must be turned into commodities that can be priced and sold. People must be convinced to buy the “services” they formerly got for free, and to pay more for better service. Hence corporations and their politicians have campaigned to discredit public schools.

This was easy to do because the US has two distinct school systems. Suburban schools rank among the best in the world by every measure. On the other hand, urban schools are underfunded



Demolition of Pierson Elementary School in Flint, MI. The closing of auto factories in the Flint area has led to the closing of 15 schools in the last five years.

PHOTO/JIM WEST

and offer terrible education. Stanford University estimated that California schools, for example, had been underfunded by a trillion dollars since the 1970s. This is apartheid education — separate and unequal. The urban schools are the ones being privatized first, because the corporations can get away with attacking them. Because the urban schools are poor, it is more easy to paint them as failing and privatize them.

The destruction of public schools under No Child Left Behind is aimed precisely at urban schools. They receive the most federal money for poor children, so they are the most vulnerable to the threat of losing this critical money. Rural schools are right behind. A recent Supreme Court decision regarding race and desegregation cleared another obstacle along the path to privatization of

the public schools by the corporations.

The government has now tried to take the question of equal quality education off the table. Public schools are being opened for a hostile takeover. Our children are proffered as commodities and revenue-producers, and considered future deficits to society.

The Business Roundtable and corporate “philanthropreneurs” are now determining the direction for public education. The education they want is for the workforce they want: uneducated contingent workers who slide ever deeper into poverty and homelessness. This is the workforce that global corporations require. This education policy reflects the truly cancerous idea that people must serve corporations.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Computers and digital media resources offer

incredible possibilities for public education for almost nothing. For the cost of the Iraq war — \$2 billion a week for 3.5 years — children and adults worldwide could become lifelong learners and open up vast new realms of public cooperation and service. Everyone knows that public education is the only way to empower human beings to fulfill their potential in every way.

The public still has a legal right to control their schools; it has the moral obligation to assert that right. We can’t rebuild the old public school system that was designed for the industrial era — nor should we. The demand for equal, quality education means far more now than it did a year ago. We need to fight forward to a system of public education that truly reflects our potential as human beings.

“Keep the Public in Public Schools”

A new pamphlet by Steven Miller on the corporate take-over of public education. To order, send \$1 donation to Speakers for a New America, c/o People's Tribune, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL, 60654-3524.

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Statement of Dedication

(The dedication below was read at the Home-Going services for our fallen comrade, sister and friend, Frances Cleaves. Frances Cleaves, like so many leaders, emerged at a time in history when a social movement was getting under way. In Flint, MI, in the 1980s, a movement of unemployed autoworkers found expression in their demand for jobs and live-able wages as many jobs were lost forever to production without the need for the thousands of autoworkers who had historically performed that work. Fran became one of the leaders of that movement as she articulated the frustrations and the demands of those fighting for their survival. Her clear understanding of the irrevocable connection between the employed and the unemployed helped to advance that movement. Frances Cleaves, like so many leaders before her, leaves a legacy that others will invariably continue. Fran's forcefulness and passionate voice and leadership will be missed but never forgotten.)



Frances Cleaves. PHOTO/DONATED

In celebrating the life of Frances Cleaves, a life filled with love of family, love of community, and love of God, we want to reflect just briefly on how she crossed many paths and touched many lives as a warrior.

You may have met Fran when she hired in at Chevy in the hole. There she befriended her co-workers and fought for workers' rights on the shop floor. Did you see her at the union hall, energizing the membership to stand their ground or challenging the leaders to do

the right thing?

You may have met her in the early 80s when plant closings and layoffs began to consume Flint. Unemployed autoworkers sure were glad we had Warrior Fran as our spokesperson when we picketed, marched, erected Tent City and sent busses to Washington, D.C. to fight for jobs. She took a back seat to no one in being a loyal union activist whether employed or unemployed. Remember the big Unemployment Committee meeting when Fran brought in the Welfare Rights Organization to brief laid off autoworkers how to navigate the Welfare system while teaching us that autoworkers and recipients share a common enemy.

Did you attend the "No Crystal Stair Forum" she organized working with Elise Bryant addressing the empowerment of working women? Perhaps you met her later when she went on to help organize Area Wide Women's Coalition. Did you see her with the Coalition marching down Saginaw Street at the UAW Anniversary Parade, with those red berets? The women were not to be forgotten in securing victory in the historic founding of the UAW. She was proud when the Coalition showed up at the Valley that time as Fran led an informational picket to help young workers at Herman's get organized into the union.

Did you attend the Black History Month Labor Awards Programs held at Flint UM-Flint celebrate the 1937 Sit Down Strike and to salute the unsung heroes in our community which our Warrior Frances helped

found and emceed for many years?

Is there anybody here who can't remember at least one riveting dynamic speech she gave in front of City Council or the Flint Board of Education over the years?

If you live in the Fifth Ward, you know her as a fixture on Election Day at Cook School and then Mt. Taber where she helped get many a politician elected and helped get rid of some as well.

Most recently, we found Fran attending the Welfare Rights Anniversary Celebration where she was the recipient of the first Helen Stanley Award. We saw her in Benton Harbor, Michigan with the Poverty Roundtable, at the sentencing hearing of the Rev. Edward Pinckney. You saw her stand tall with Sisters United in the campaign to retain the seat of Carolyn Simms, along with Sisters highly acclaimed 'Meet the Candidates' forum.

Frances Cleaves was a warrior because she had certain gifts — speaking skills, people skills, courage, charisma and heart. She used these gifts to help create a better community and in turn a better world. Just like Harriett Tubman had a vision for freeing mankind from human bondage; our Warrior Fran had a vision for freeing mankind from human suffering brought about by a failed society.

With that in mind, the Poverty Roundtable Sisters United and Michigan Welfare Rights Organization will plant a Revolutionary Tree in Frances Cleaves honor.

*Sincerely,
Poverty Roundtable, Sisters United,
Michigan Welfare Rights Organization*

(The tree planting ceremony will be announced in the very near future.)

The Democrats have betrayed us

Editor's note: This editorial is excerpted from a longer piece that appeared in our sister publication, the Tribuno del Pueblo.

There isn't a morning that we don't wake up to news of another raid, another dead body found in the desert, another child torn from their parents' arms, another law against immigrants passed.

We are outraged. We march, we demonstrate, we protest. But the attacks don't stop, the raids don't stop, the deaths in the desert don't stop. Now we need to analyze our situation and plan our next step. And we must trust in our own strength when we do so — and not depend on the established parties, Republican or Democrat.

The latest attack was against Elvira Arellano, who at gunpoint was separated from her son Saul in Los Angeles and deported. Her crime? She came in search of a job. She crossed the border illegally. She refused to leave her son behind and took sanctuary in a church in Chicago.

This attack is not only on Elvira. It's a warning to all of us to keep quiet or expect a similar fate. It's an assault on the movement she symbolizes — for immigrant rights.

Just days before Elvira was seized, President Bush announced his own immigration plan — more raids, more enforcement, more terror. He is tightening the dragnet on the undocumented worker.

This is particularly true of his assault on people using false Social Security numbers. After the government challenges the number, the employer will have 90 days to either show it is good or fire the worker. The first round is expected to put nearly a million people on the street.

DIVIDED AGAINST OURSELVES

This situation is huge, not only for undocumented immigrants but for all U.S. workers. It will leave the undocumented at the mercy of employers who are paying starvation wages. It will become the standard against which all other workers will compete.

The undocumented worker has become a political weapon for the big-business ruling class to maintain its

control of the entire working class. Unfortunately, the undocumented are the ones paying the most — sometimes with their lives.

To keep the working class divided, undocumented workers are portrayed as the cause of all workers' problems. "Brown hordes are invading our country," they tell us. They use the undocumented as a scapegoat for the loss of jobs — "stolen by the illegals." They hammer on it in their corporate media.

And when some of us try to get out from under ruling-class control, they use the Democrats to rein us in. Since the movement for legalization exploded in 2006, every effort has been made to herd us towards the Democratic Party.

In the mid-term elections of 2006, Latino voters came out in great numbers and went decisively (70 percent) for the Democrats. Indeed, working-class voters as a whole gave the Democrats a mandate, and not only on immigration, but on the Iraq War as well.

Some 77 percent of Latino voters said undocumented immigrants should be given a chance to attain legal status. And they weren't alone — 57 percent of all voters thought the

same thing.

But they got nothing.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

So before we can solve immigration (or anything else) we need to settle scores with those who have betrayed us — the Democrats. They feigned to be our friends while they stabbed us in the back. We asked for full citizenship — and they gave us more enforcement and a distant promise of legalization.

"The Democrats played a game against us," said Jorge Rivero, a Dallas immigration activist. Juan Garcia of the Committee of Immigrants in Action said, "It's a shame that immigration has become a political football for both parties. I trusted the Democrats, but they turned their back on us."

Instead of relying on the Democrats, we must rely on our working-class brothers and sisters, the practical revolutionaries who are fighting for housing, for Hurricane Katrina survivors, for the unemployed and the homeless.

To move ahead, we need a declaration of independence from the Democrats. Burn us once, shame on them. Burn us twice, shame on us.

TIME FOR THE CORPORATE TWO-PARTY SHELL GAME AGAIN!

We must organize our own political party

FROM THE EDITORS

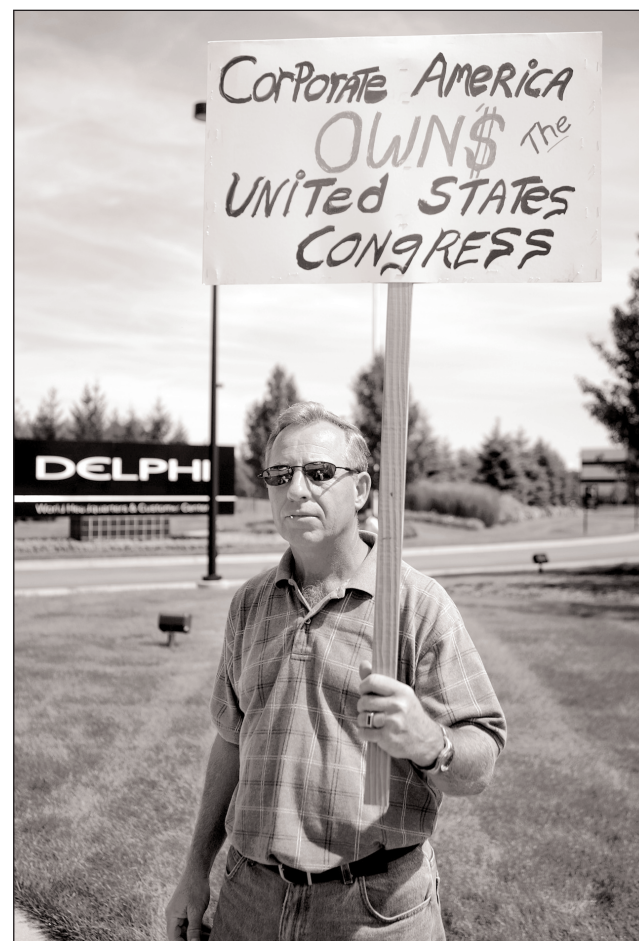
Now that Labor Day has arrived, it's "officially" time for Americans to kickoff the primary and general election season, to choose a new President of the United States and members of both the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. For a large part of the past 7 years the Bush Administration has exercised total political control over all branches of our federal government. Last November, the Democrats won a majority in both houses of the U.S. Congress by riding a wave of popular opposition amongst the U.S. citizenry to the war in Iraq.

However, when given the opportunity in May of this year to end funding for that war, the Democrats in both houses supported the war funding demands of the White House, thus taking the American people for another \$100 billion ride for more death and destruction. And then again, just last month the Democrats, after years of contrived arguing, haggling and legal wrangling with the Bush Administration over its illegal spying on the American people, voted to authorize a new and more expanded form of that same illegal and unconstitutional eavesdropping program.

Meanwhile, each month thousands upon thousands continue to get laid off from bread-winning jobs;

more than two hundred thousand Katrina victims still have not been relocated back to the Gulf coast cities and towns from which they came; nearly 50 million people have no health care security, along with tens of millions more with health insurance that doesn't cover the illnesses they have; our national infrastructure is falling apart at the seams; billions of dollars per week are being looted from our public treasury by the corporations; millions of immigrant workers are being hunted down like fugitive slaves; personal bankruptcies and housing foreclosures are soaring; the ranks of the homeless and those without adequate housing continues to grow and the list goes on and on.

As illustrated above the Democratic Party fails to represent the interests of the broad mass of the American people. It's become, along with its Republican Party counterpart, a direct political representative of the corporations who draft the laws of the land. The American people have been lied to and misled long enough. We must use this election season to challenge and expose the corporate two-party shell game, for the charade that it is, while educating to lay the foundation for the American people to take the next step. That step is to organize the independent political party we truly need to represent our political class interests.



Protester at Delphi World Headquarters.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Saving Jean Klock Park

Most residents of Benton Harbor, Michigan are deeply entrenched with daily struggles with raw sewage in their basements, inferior Hope VI housing, unjust code enforcement by the police department and the daily dilemma on how to get their next meal. They have city leaders who won't listen — but instead play into the hands of Whirlpool, Cornerstone Alliance and Harbor Shores (all basically one entity). They are systematically turning control of the city over to an industry giant that wants Benton Harbor's lakefront property for a golf course.

The Friends of Jean Klock Park are reaching out to residents. I fear that the loss of the park will mean that residents will be pushed aside in favor of wealthy second home owners from Chicago and elsewhere who will line some pockets with gold but not those of the people of Benton Harbor.

Here is an example of how the corporations, media and local government are working together to take over parks and communities:

Recently, Jack Nicklaus came to tour the golf project and finalize design plans. He would not meet with the public. Prior to his visit, on August 10th, I and others discovered a 75-100 foot long linear pile of neatly laid out trash — 13 toilets, tires, furniture, etc, in an area adjacent to the park. I knew this trash had been dumped and was staged for Jack's visit. TV news broadcasts were highlighting the trashy areas of the proposed golf course and reporting that a golf course was the only solution to stop the dumping and clean the up contaminated land.

On the 10th, I met with a fellow member at the park. Upon leaving a Benton Harbor police officer drove into the intersection with lights flashing. Then came a four wheeler



Benton Harbor senior citizen Mary Carter at historic Jean Klock Park.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

with more Benton Harbor officers. I knew that Jack was on his way. I went back to warn the other member. Two Benton Harbor police officers and two members of the Cornerstone Alliance approached us. One officer said, "Ms. Drake, you aren't here to cause problems for Jack are you? You aren't going to yell, holler and scream are you?" I told him I had no intentions of doing so but did not appreciate being harassed. I was told that they were there for "my protection"

An entourage of 30-40 people soon appeared along with Jack who totally ignored us. We were surrounded by the two police officers and Cornerstone people and knew if we moved or said a word we would be arrested. When Jack's entourage left so did our police and Cornerstone bodyguards. When I left the park the entourage was gawking at the pile of trash near the ninth hole. I told an officer that the pile of trash was staged for Jack's visit. His reply was, "It's been there longer than a couple of days and I know that for a fact." It was

clear that he was taking orders from Harbor Shores. A day later the witness to the dumping went to police headquarters to file a report. They refused his report saying that "workers were hired to pick up trash in the park and put out it there so a front end loader could pick it up at another time."

I have finally experienced just a taste of the police intimidation and personal injustice that many of the citizens of Benton Harbor have been dealt. Until we all understand that we are fighting the same fight to stop the complete corporate takeover of a city and its deeded lakefront access and most precious natural resource, we can't succeed. We are prepared to stand up for the residents of Benton Harbor but need them to stand with us if all are to succeed. Together we CAN overcome anything! And once we do we're on our way up because empowerment is worth more than gold!

Carol Drake
Friends of JKP

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL

A triumph of international solidarity

BY CATHLEEN WILLIAMS

“ENTRY PERMITTED,” the program of the San Francisco International Poetry Festival proclaimed, in print that imitated the rubber stamp of an immigration official upon a passport — here, however, openly rejecting exclusion and censorship in favor of the free cultural exchange. Hundreds of people, hungry to hear the poetry of our common humanity — poems of outrage and affirmation — attended the three day event on July 27, 28, and 29, which featured free poetry readings across the city, in libraries, cafes, galleries, and, the spacious theatre of the Palace of Fine Arts.

This was poetry of both protest and love — the “human poem,” as San Francisco Poet Laureate and festival host Jack Hirschman said, at the kick-off celebration, standing on a make-shift stage in Jack Kerouac alley in North Beach below the festival banner as jazz musicians played and San Francisco’s cool summer fog rolled in across the cobblestones — poetry which takes as its mission the awakening of our society to the possibilities of social change and revolution, which speaks on behalf of the powerless and impoverished, which reminds us of what is essential — humanity and peace and economic security — not militarism and war and capitalist exploitation. The festival was supported by the San Francisco Public Library and its volunteers, and the Mayor’s office; its co-hosts included San Francisco’s previous Poet Laureates, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Janice Mirikitani, and devorah major, each a political poet of national stature.

Since ancient times, poetry has spoken from, for, and to the community, articulating the universal truths of our common destinies — all of us facing mortality, all of us rejoicing in love — both as individuals and social beings. Poetry is a world-wide language that nourishes our souls with anger, determination, and hope.



Banner of the Poetry Festival.

PHOTO/DONATED

Manifesto for the Festival

Sabah Yasim, an Iraqi poet, was refused entry to the festival by the US government. His letter, excerpted below, was a manifesto for the festival:

We have come today to bring together our words that struggle for a better world, a world where humanity would truly be free, a world without persecution or discrimination, whether on a racial or national basis.... I believe poetry is a beacon among the arts, a thing of beauty that can help foretell the beauty of the future. It can show us the potential world that can be created if we so choose — it can be the seeds of our hope...What is more beautiful than a free nation? What is lovelier than a free human mind, than the liberty of music, or even that of a simple plant or river? What greater thing can humanity hope for than to live free, free from hunger but also free to express one’s opinion?



Hanan Awwad of Palestine. At left is Sharon Doiubiago of the USA, who read Hanan’s translations.

PHOTO/SARAH POWELL

Quotes from Festival poets

I wanted to create an international festival whose diversity of languages and themes rooted in class content would serve as resistance to the globalizing atrocities of corporate greed and war. What happened is that, to the delight and amazement of all, the “audience” turned into a revolutionarily receptive People, at the cultural level, and their yearning for change became an affirming light that illuminated San Francisco in a way that Poetry hasn’t in a generation.

— Jack Hirschman

What Jack Hirschman did was create a space of freedom and creation, of expansion of the spirit, a place to breathe possibility and revelations, with surprising interactions of images, i.e., “the orange butterflies” (as the trash trucks are called in Baghdad in the poem by Sabah M. Jasim (Iraq), and the “beautiful trash trucks and “beautiful Union of trash collectors” lauded by Aharon Shabtai (Israel). And all the events were free. Every kind of person, of all ages, of all ethnicities and of all income levels was there. People listened on the sidewalks.

— Kristine Brown

It was “a return to that Poetry Renaissance dreamed in the ‘60s by the pacifist poet Kenneth Rexroth in places lived by the ‘Beats’, where social poetry as a poetry of love continues in perennial revolt by sounding out its own uncomfortable truths.”

— Laura Zanetti (Italy)

Poetry is the freedom of spirit and for three days we were free. Free from the brutality of a government that treats its citizens like retarded alien stepchildren. Free from the oppressive psychological terrorism perpetrated on the workers who keep this republic running. Free from the environmental rape the corporate sociopathic, profligate robber barons routinely employ in order to keep themselves and their stockholders entrenched in excessive lifestyles that remain antipathic to a true humanity. Poets from around the world demonstrated the essence of communication with brilliant and moving language that speaks to our collective consciousness. A universal language that stirs human potential, that says, yes we, individually and collectively, are so much more than the sum of our parts. And those who attended were part of the seedling of revolution. What joy! What power! A power that comes organically from within the human spirit.

— Scott Lettieri

Poets who read at Festival

The roster of poets (below) spanned the world and nation. Each brought a special perspective, reminding the audience that in every country there are activist poets, who, with other artists, reject the false and terrible “solutions” of well tailored “world leaders” who speak their lies and advocate the interests of giant corporations.

Maram al Masri, Syria
Hanan Awwad, Palestine
Miguel Mendoza Barreto, Venezuela
Bei Dao, China
Ferruccio Brugnaro, Italy
Nicole Cage-Florentini, Martinique
Frances Combes, France
Agneta Falk, USA
Sinan Gudzevic, Serbia/Croatia
Mark Bamuthi Joseph, USA
Anna Lombardo, Italy
Alberto Masala, Sardinia/Italy
Sarah Menefee, USA
Cletus Nelson-Nwadike, Nigeria/Sweden
Sotirios Pastakas
Aharon Shabtai, Israel
Carmen Yanez, Chile/Spain
Sabah M. Jasim, Iraq
and the 4 Poet Laureates of San Francisco:
Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Janice Mirikitani,
devorah major, and Jack Hirschman

IT’S NOT JUST THE POVERTY

It’s not just the poverty
It’s the abandonment
the sorrow in knowing a boy gunned down
dying in the arms of his mother
without its meaning a thing to anyone
without anybody preventing it
poverty looks like a dead girl
raped by all the insects of this world
poverty doesn’t go away from my eyes
my gaze shakes with its rags
and my mouth is torn with its shreds
poverty walks
and leaves my footprints in its path
I can’t squash it like a damned mosquito
that carries all the wailing
of the world in its hate.

BY MIGUEL MENDOZA BARRETO of Marturin, Venezuela. Translated by Jack Hirschman from Spanish, it illustrates how poetry can capture the emotional heart of political struggle.



A small part of the crowd in Jack Kerouac Alley where the festival kicked off. Left to Right: Jack Hirschman, Matthew Fury (USA filmmaker), and Ferruccio Brugnaro (Italy). Behind Brugnaro is Alberto Masala (Italy) talking to Nicole Cage-Florentiny (Martinique) and Sinan Gudzevich (Serbia/Croatian). Next to Brugnaro is Maria Niero (Italy).

PHOTO/SARAH POWELL

IT’S TIME FOR THE KNIGHT TO TRIUMPH

In the shade of the olives
In the lemon leaves
In the eyes of birds
I look for you
On the summit of the red volcano
In the land painted with thyme,
O greatest joy of mine,
O greatest joy,
O home of sorrows, erupt!
O home of sorrows, erupt!
Shall we worship other gods
In the shade of your ashes
And hang on the gallows
Of your branches?
Can we forget
That we belong to the pregnant earth?
Can we forget
that we come from a bigger root?
O home of sorrows, erupt!
O home of sorrows, erupt!
Givara’s approaching.
The revolution kindles its insurrection.
It’s ignited by the tawny face,
Givara kisses its forehead
And perceives unconquerable lions.
Gaza, O my mother,
O Gaza,
The flame of longing grows bright,
Grandfather’s tent holds a song
Made up of the dreams of poverty,
Played by grains of light
And the sickle.
This is my mother, she bears a secret
Drawing me toward the yellow sands
To love, fragrant in my homeland
In a hut on a green mountainside.
April!
Proclaim that my blood exudes the fragrance
Of the land of my ancestors.

HANAN AWWAD of Palestine is an activist for a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. She translated the poem from Palestinian Arabic.

GLORY FOR TALI

If mother
Won’t send you bananas,
Tali Fahima,
I will deliver you in a poem
Your wings of glory.
Because for people who are used
to militaristic crap-filled mess-tins
You have brought a half a loaf of bread
And a glass of milk
And for those whose roofs
Are being blown off above their heads,
Those whose tiles are taken apart
From underneath their feet,
Those who live under the lynching regime
With pocket money you traveled
And brought a smile.

AHARON SHABTAI is an award-winning Israeli poet. Translated from Hebrew by Adva E. Levin, it was written to celebrate Tali Fahima, a woman jailed in Israel for associating with Palestinians in Jenin.

The People’s Tribune’s website at <http://www.peopletribune.org> has more quotes, poems and photos from the Festival. We regret that we were unable to publish everything. Call 800-691-6888 for more information.



Aharon Shabtai, fighting working class poet from Israel.

PHOTO/SARAH POWELL



Alejandro Murguia, of the USA, who read the poems of Miguel Mendoza Barreto, the Venezuelan poet whose visa was blocked by the US government.

PHOTO/SARAH POWELL

STOP THE WAR

Don’t wait till it’s
too late.
Don’t stay silent, not any more.
The missiles
the bombs
are getting
the upper hand
on the whole universe
on all of life.
Monster animals have taken
the reins
of earth
and world.
The darkening of the mind
and soul
is almost
total.
Don’t clam up, don’t stay silent.
Only war talks
strong and loud
in these hours
spreading blazes of blood
and death
in city and plain.
Don’t be silent, don’t keep still.
The human heart assaulted
by the terror
of darkness

these days
like a defenseless child
flounders
in uttermost weeping.

BY FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO, one of Italy’s leading poets, he called the audience to action, urgent and immediate. The poem is translated by Jack Hirschman.



Nigerian poet Cletus Nelson-Nwadike, who writes in Swedish, with Agneta Falk, the Anglo-Swedish poet who translated his work.

PHOTO/SARAH POWELL

WE NEED A STRATEGY TO PUT OUR COUNTRY ON A NEW COURSE

From the Editors

In the next few pages you will hear voices against the war and for a new direction for America. Despite the fact that a clear majority of Americans oppose the war, it continues. Why? In part because the corporations that rule this country have a global strategy that hinges on controlling the Middle East, and in part because the military-industrial complex is at the heart of the US economy. While we are told there is no money to provide jobs, housing or health care, the military-industrial complex gets about \$400 billion per year from the US government directly, and more indirectly. The wealthy few take food out of the mouths of our children to finance their dreams of global conquest and more riches. They threaten to plunge the whole world into war. The threat of a global nuclear catastrophe looms. We, the people, can stop this dictatorship of the billionaires. We must start thinking for ourselves. We must organize ourselves around the demands of the millions of people who are being destroyed by this system—they are forced to fight for a new, cooperative society where everyone's needs are met. By organizing ourselves around their struggle, we guarantee that we will stay on course toward a new world free of poverty and war.

Journey for Humanity exposed Democrats' complicity with Bush regime

By Paul Schaefer

Cindy Sheehan came out of "retirement" and initiated The Journey for Humanity and Accountability, which caravanned through 17 cities in the South, the Southeast, and Eastern US from July 10-29.

On May 26, Cindy "resigned" from the Democratic Party. On May 28, she indicated that she needed to regroup. Both finances and health were hurting.

But, in June and early July, there were heavy fatalities in Iraq, Cheney refused to hand over documents by claiming not to be part of the executive branch, there were emails from soldiers and Iraqis telling Cindy that she couldn't give up, and the kicker that "frosted her cupcake" was Bush's commutation of Scooter Libby.

She was going to join Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr. in a march from Atlanta to DC after his hearing on July 12 in Macon, Ga., but when that hearing got postponed, she decided to do a march anyway. It just happened, also, that there was a core nucleus of activists helping Cindy celebrate her birthday at Camp Casey in Crawford, Tx.

So part of the decision-making was somewhat spontaneous. We only had a few days to get organized and the piggybank wasn't very full. Since time was squeezed, we had to do more driving than marching. We had about 15 people in the crew, five to seven vehicles most days.

What were the goals of the Journey? You'll hear a number of issues if you listen to Cindy's speeches at stops along the Journey. But number one, as I understand it, was to put impeachment back on the table, impeachment being the quickest way to stop the war in Iraq, bring the troops home, help the victims of the

"unnatural" disaster in New Orleans, restore our democratic rights, bring war criminals to justice, and put everyone else on notice that it's not politics as usual.

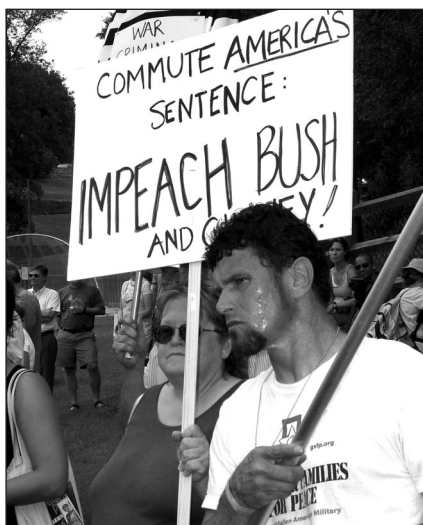
We supported local actions at the 16 or 17 cities along the way, and gave Nancy Pelosi a deadline of July 23 for bringing impeachment forward or face Cindy Sheehan as an independent candidate in District 8. Also, on July 23, we met with John Conyers, House Judiciary Committee chair, and gave him over a million signatures for impeachment.

Conyers began to equivocate all over the place, so Cindy called an end to the meeting and we began a sit-in. Conyers called the cops and eventually about 47 people got arrested. There were 24 of us, I believe, in the office and we had some great chants, like "Conyers, Conyers, need a reason? Torture, war, lying, treason."

Pelosi and Conyers have not put impeachment on the table. Was the Journey a failure? Not at all. It exposed the Democrats even more as being co-conspirators in a criminal government. As Cindy put it one evening, (paraphrasing) "Bush and Cheney are the boils on the ass of democracy; they are not the disease. We can and should lance the boils but we might still get Hillary."

It's sharpened the ideological struggle on lots of levels. Both whites and blacks accused the Journey of "racism" for targeting Conyers. Some writers at the *Black Commentator* led that foray. Fortunately, Dave Lindorff, Bruce Dixon at *Black Agenda Report*, Rev. Yearwood of the Hip Hop Caucus, and David Swanson of afterdowningstreet.org have stepped up with rebuttals.

In recent days, Katha Pollitt of *The Nation* has begged Cindy not to



A rally in Charlotte, N.C. during the Journey. PHOTO/PAUL SCHAEFER

run against Pelosi. These "progressives" are being forced to do diversionary runs for the Democrats and are showing their true colors.

Likewise, reactionaries are also showing their colors. We saw signs or heard slogans like, "Traitors", "Give War a Chance", "Torture so we don't get tortured." We faced groups, like "Gathering of Eagles" and "Rolling Thunder." We dealt with police in Columbus, Ga. and Charlotte, N.C., who seemed to favor the counter-protestors, or did not keep their word, or did not keep protestors and counter-protestors separate—police who, in effect, fostered violence.

We saw, I believe, that a majority of the people want impeachment and know what's right and what's wrong, but they need a voice for their anger and frustration.

Paul Schaefer is a member of Veterans for Peace, which supports impeachment. He lives in a small city of 6,000 in West Texas, a city which now has a weekly "honk to impeach" demonstration.

Shut down the war, say Iraq vets

By Robert Birt

I attended a meeting of the "Iraq Veterans Against the War," at a Methodist church in Baltimore.

There seems to be more opposition to the war among Iraq veterans than the corporate media is letting on. These vets are all young people. They're all against the war and want it ended immediately! They were a cross section of America: white males, Black males, a Latina woman — and all working class youth. In short, sons and daughters of the common people.

They're upset not only that the government put them in harms way by starting a war based on lies for corporate interests (which is precisely how at least one of them phrased it), they're infuriated that they are being used more as the butchers of Iraqi civilians than the warriors against terrorism that they were supposed to be.

Each mentioned, with a pained conscience, that he/she had slain civilian men, women and children. Each reported in so many words that, "They had us going into homes and neighborhoods, shooting into homes and killing family, killing children," etc. One was ordered to shoot into crowds. (There are, in addition to armed insurgencies, little reported, but more common Iraqi civilian protests and demonstrations, being put down by force of arms.) Another vet mentioned blowing holes in people's homes the size of baseballs.

But what's interesting is the resistance within our military among common soldiers which, according to the vets, is beginning to scare the shit out of the higher officials. Such resistance helped end the Vietnam war some time ago. As in Vietnam, though not yet on as high a level, our soldiers are increasingly refusing to go out on assignment — especially against civilians. The Washington, D.C. president of Iraq veterans against the war stated that a growing number of vets are now in legal trouble (carrying danger of court martial and imprisonment) for refusing to go out on assignments, or refusing to engage the "enemy." Shades of Vietnam! all over again.

I found the militancy and awakening conscience of these young vets quite inspiring — especially when some told how little social conscience they had before the war experience. Now one of the Black vets insists not only that the government end the war immediately, but also that the government makes reparations to the Iraqi people. He also suggested that if the government doesn't shut down the war, then the people should shut down the government — that the struggle should be brought to the very lawns of the White House!

The young vets insisted that as the resistance to the present war increases there will be more space for disgruntled vets to increase their resistance also. So, the ball is in our court. What are we going to do?

Military families speak out against the war

Editor's note: The articles on this page are excerpted from longer articles submitted by men who have sons in the military. They are members of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), an organization of people opposed to the war in Iraq who have relatives or loved ones currently in the military or who have served in the military since the buildup to the Iraq war in fall 2002. Its membership currently includes over 3,400 military families, with new families joining daily. If you have family members or loved ones in the military and you are opposed to this war, you can join MFSO by sending an e-mail to mfso@mfso.org.

Father's Day weekend 2007 with my son, Sgt. Ryan S. Kahlor

June 18, 2007—I was sitting across from my son the Saturday night before Father's Day. We drank a few beers together and talked about the last four years. Our last Father's Day together was in 2002. Since then my 23-year-old son Ryan had been in either Iraq or Germany. During that time he had spent over 24 months in combat.

...I couldn't believe that little boy that used to hold on to me so tightly knowing I would always keep him safe was now the grown man sitting across the table. Although Ryan has lifetime injuries from being in numerous Bradleys hitting IEDs, near-miss sniper fire and back injuries from falling off a building during patrol, I knew my wife and I were so lucky our son was home in one piece.

...What he didn't realize is that I was also thinking about fathers like Al Zapala and Carlos Arredondo. Fathers of sons that were killed in Iraq and would never share this same moment I was so privileged to have with my son. Soon the evening ended with a hug from my son and him saying, "I am glad to be home Dad and I love you" as he went out the door to spend time with one of his high school buddies.

The next morning on Father's Day I was reading the LA Times when I saw the picture of a smiling young man and it read "one of two soldiers killed in blast." There were three more pictures of young men in uniform and below a list of 16 more names under "Other Deaths" and the statement, "The Defense Department last week identified the following American military personnel killed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Qatar."

It would be a Father's Day weekend that would be deeply embedded into the memories of 20 families. How many of those 20 had fathers that will open a card from their son that weekend. The son not knowing it was his last written words to his Dad. That some of these fathers will have to meet a flag-draped coffin that will silently arrive at a nearby airport. I know I will never forget

this Father's Day or the pictures and the list of names I read that day. That I will always value the time I spent sitting across from my son the night before and drinking beer together. That I will continue thinking of those 20 families and all the fathers like Al and Carlos that will never get to spend another Father's Day with their sons.

Ryan has been home since May 27th and reports to Camp Irwin June 20th. It has been nice hearing our son saying Mom and Dad around the house....My wife and I have both enjoyed the sounds of our only child being home, the extra laundry, the empty refrigerator and just knowing that he is safe with us.

I have been reading Ryan's journal from his last year in Iraq....It's page after page of horror, but it brings home what war really is and doesn't romanticize it. The following is part of one day in our son's life in Iraq:

11/3/2006 — "On the ground, walls and roof tops were pieces of human flesh, bones and gear. I moved to the first body that I saw and picked him up to put him on a stretcher. When I did I realized that everything that was in his head was pouring out of a hole in the back of his head....I ran to the next body. He was barely breathing and his body was limp....By the time I had gotten him to the Bradley he bled out. His left leg was gone and most of the back side of his body. His counterpart was running alongside us with his leg in hand. I took a breath and looked around again and just saw bodies and pieces of bodies."

This is an excerpt from a small portion of that day and not even the worst part of the day. Ryan was only 22 years old that day but his final statement was that of a young man way beyond his years: "The true wounds are not just one of flesh and bone, but of the mind after experiencing such horror. Those are the ones you cannot treat, only overcome it with a strong will."

*Speaking out for our loved ones,
Tim Kahlor, father of
Sgt Ryan S Kahlor
Military Families Speak Out*



Teachers in New York demand "Money for Education, Not War" outside the Republican National Convention in 2004.

PHOTO/JIM WEST

U.S. troops on endless snipe hunt

Take a serious look at this administration's announced goal of creating a secure democracy in Iraq. It means that at some point the balance scale will reveal — Eureka, everything's hunky dory over there — and we may exit as proud victors.

Precisely where is that point? When the murders and kidnapping stop? Because people get bumped off or kidnapped once in awhile even in relatively peaceful cities like Copenhagen. Does Baghdad have to become another Copenhagen? Or should we settle, say, for Los Angeles, which has about 900 homicides a year? Obviously we can't hold out for perfection. But how much distance from perfection is the Bush brain trust willing to settle for?

Moving on to the goal of democracy, you'll find another amorphous goal, and one that has arguably been met already. Iraq has an elected government. It's not functioning like a Lexus, but the fact that there was some kind of election creating this parliament is in fact evidence of democracy, precisely as Bush, Inc. claimed after the voting took place. But that wasn't enough for Bush. Clearly he's bent on the country having a good elected government. Define good.

In our own country we have a Louisiana congressman recently caught with \$90,000 in his freezer, indicating

perhaps we don't have a perfectly functioning democracy. Go back a little further and you find we had two presidential elections in a row decided under less than perfect electoral circumstances (see Florida in 2000, Iowa in 2004). Should the rest of NATO send over an armada to repair American democracy?

This mission that Bush, Inc. spelled out for Iraq was never more than a quicky excuse it came up with when the original announced purposes were proved false. Security and democracy sounded to the war's creators like good substitutes to fill in for nonexistent WMD programs and nonexistent ties to al-Qaeda while they held on to the oil-fields and Bush settled his personal daddy business with Saddam.

Now we have 160,000 troops over there on a snipe hunt so a pack of liars can try to prove it's not a pack of liars. Everyone who's been to summer camp understands a snipe hunt. You send new kids out in the forest with sacks and tell them to come back with some snipes, and all of them are too embarrassed to admit they don't know what a snipe is (it isn't anything). But on this particular snipe hunt, the kids are killed and maimed every day in spasms of violence that are growing even deadlier. In Military Families Speak Out, those snipe

Continued on page 10



The Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless Shelter at Peachtree and Pine.

PHOTO/METRO ATLANTA TASK FORCE FOR THE HOMELESS

To serve humanity? Or a recipe for attacking the poor?

By John Slaughter

Remember the science fiction show about creatures from outer space who came to earth with a book entitled "To Serve Humanity"? It was a cookbook! And the main dish was humanity! The city of Atlanta's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness is a recipe of the same sort. Its real design is to attack the homeless, to exclude and drive out a population that is no longer needed or wanted.

How do you end homelessness? Homes for all! But the city's plan is, while calling for an end to homelessness, to destroy all remaining public housing, to allow the developers to greedily gobble up this prime real estate and build luxury homes and playgrounds for the rich. Of course the poor have to go.

Atlanta over the past 5 years has re-

ceived over \$40 million dollars for its anti-homeless program, and about all it has to show for it is something called the Gateway Center. Gateway expelled several hundred women and children, saying "We are not a shelter." Not one unit of new public housing for the poor has been constructed.

Standing in outspoken opposition to this is the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless. They were there when the homeless women and children were driven out of Gateway, demanding that something be done. They were there when the Atlanta Housing Authority initiated the Olympic Legacy Program to begin the first phase of the demolition of public housing in Atlanta. They were there when the city, at the urging of Central Atlanta Progress, an alliance of downtown corporations, began to pass ordinances to criminalize and im-

prison the homeless.

Now the Task Force for the Homeless is a leader in the fight to prevent the last standing public housing in the city from being demolished, and in exposing the sham program to end homelessness. So the corporate/government alliance is now targeting the Task Force. They have embarked upon a campaign to deny funding and to shut down the shelter the Task Force operates at Peachtree and Pine.

Why are the homeless and poor despised so by the corporate/government leaders? As Anita Beaty, director of the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless says, "The city has taken the direction from the downtown business community that the redevelopment of downtown depends on clearing poor and homeless people out of the way. We are perceived as an obstacle to that." Dr.

Gloria Bromell-Tinubu, former City Council representative from the district that includes Peachtree and Pine, and now a member of the board of the Homeless Task Force says, "Slavery is the worst thing and homelessness is the second worst thing that can be visited upon anyone. To be homeless, to be victimized again and criminalized again, is unconscionable."

The homeless need homes, food, clothing, health care, and for a government to fail to provide for the needs of all of its citizens is unconscionable. It has to go, not the poor. "To serve humanity" must be a recipe not to devour the poor, but to provide homes for all, health care for all, to end hunger for all, to provide for all of the needs of all of the people. The Homeless Task Force at Peachtree and Pine has taken a stand, and it must prevail.

U.S. troops on endless snipe hunt

Continued from page 9

hunters are members of our families.

Americans say they're sick of this pointless war, but with a son headed for his second tour in Iraq, I don't know which group is more maddening—the 28 percent fascist holdouts who still proclaim this president is doing a good job, or the 70 percent that's watching American Idol and strolling through malls.

Evidence the administration told terrible (and illegal) lies to sell this war is overwhelming. It includes memoirs from Bush's former anti-terror czar Richard Clarke, on-the-record statements from Bush's former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and his former acting FBI director Thomas Pickard, the

Downing Street Memo, etc. Arguing with the war's supporters is like arguing with the Flat Earth Society.

It's hard to believe our country has continued on this loony road to nowhere for more than four years. Under any sane system, Bush, Cheney, et al., would have been kicked out of office long ago and be writing their memoirs in prison.

Yet when you look at the words of presidential candidates in both major parties, just about none of them will provide a clear-cut statement that he or she will end U.S. participation immediately—certainly none of the "major" candidates. To find someone who makes such a flat declaration you have

to dig down to smaller players like Rep. Dennis Kucinich, who's been deemed non-presidential by Big Media and Big Election Money.

Mostly candidates claim, yes, the invasion was a bad idea, but now we're stuck with it. That last part is absolutely wrong. Expert after expert concludes that the U.S. military presence in Iraq aids no one but foreign enemies and war profiteers like Cheney.

Our group has asked members of Congress who claim to oppose this monstrous war to stop funding it. That's simple logic. If you claim to oppose cannibalism, for instance, you don't buy any more cutlery for Hannibal Lector.

But the snipe hunt, aided and abetted by Congress, continues. Democracy and security you know, we could use some of that ourselves.

*Ivan G. Goldman
Member of Military Families
Speak Out*

Military Families Speak Out
Orange County & South Bay Chapter
www.mfsooc.org
562-833-8035

**Support Our Troops
Bring Them Home Now!
Take Care of Them After
They Get Home**

Justice for Pamela Kincaid

By Mike Rhodes

A friend of mine died under disturbing and suspicious circumstances last month. I'm determined to find out the truth and discover what led to her death. Here is what I know:

Pamela Kincaid was the lead named plaintiff in the lawsuit filed by the homeless against the City of Fresno, because the city was taking and immediately destroying their property. Pam was willing to put herself on the line to protect the rights of all homeless people in this community.

On the day the class action lawsuit

was certified in Federal Court, the attorneys visited Pam in UMC, the long-term care facility she was in. A day and a half later at 1:30 AM on Wednesday, August 1, Pam fell from the fourth floor, under suspicious circumstances.

Pam was in this facility because she had been beaten, nearly to death, in mid-July. Pam had been telling me for months that she felt she was being targeted by the police and others because of the lawsuit. She was very upset about being arrested and put in jail for several days without charges ever being filed. The arrest occurred when Pam was driving around with friends in downtown

Fresno. "All of a sudden there was this swarm of cop cars," Pam said. "They got us all out of the car but they seemed mostly interested in me. One of the guys I was with had an open can of beer, which they just totally ignored. They arrested me on a probation hold. I'm not on probation and they knew that!" Pam thought she was put in jail because she was the high visibility plaintiff in a very controversial lawsuit that put the City of Fresno and the Fresno Police Department (FPD) in a bad light.

On August 1, Pam went through the doors to a balcony at the nursing facility and fell four floors to her death. The doors were supposed to have an alarm that would alert staff if they were opened and the staff knew that Pam was disoriented due to the attack. Several of Pam's friends saw her just before she died. Those that I talked to said she was doing better, she was not suicidal, and her nurse said her memory was starting to clear up. We are left with a lot of unanswered questions.

Maybe this is a tale of two cities — one where there is justice and fairness if you are well to do, but if you are poor (especially if you are a homeless woman) you can't even get the police to open an investigation after you have been beaten. At least the Coroner's office and the sheriff's department are looking into the suspicious nature of her death.

I demand justice for Pamela Kincaid. I want the Fresno Police Department to open an investigation and find out who savagely beat Pam leaving her disoriented and brain damaged. I applaud the Coroner who ordered an autopsy.



Pam Kincaid

PHOTO/MIKE RHODES

Pam was a hero. Being a part of the lawsuit was something Pam did, not for herself, but for all homeless people. It was, in part, that spirit of selflessness that made Pam such a wonderful person and a friend I will miss.

This article was excerpted from a longer version. For a list of articles and documents about the struggle for civil liberties for homeless people in Fresno, see:

<http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/homelessness.htm>



Protesters marched in New Orleans August 29 to mark the second anniversary of Katrina. A People's Tribunal was held to put the US government on trial and demand justice for survivors.

PHOTO/TED QUANT

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For a complete listing of books, visit <http://www.speakersforanewamerica.com>

VOICES FROM BENTON HARBOR, MI

REV. PINKNEY CONTINUES TO BEAT UP ON BERRIEN COUNTY JUSTICE SYSTEM

Now it is our time to take a stand. On Aug. 24, 2007, I went back into the courtroom to challenge constitutional violations in my trial and conviction on phony vote fraud charges by an all white jury not of my peers. The courtroom was filled with supporters.

At the hearing, I challenged the disproportionate number of whites on Berrien County juries. After several years of court-watching and watching several hundreds of juries panels that contained one or less blacks out of 30 individuals, I decided to do something about this. The willingness of the jury to find guilt beyond a reasonable doubt in my trial, their relying on Brenda Fox, a known drug addict and a prostitute for years, was an indication that they violated the sancity of their oath. They were motivated by something other than pursuit of truth and justice.

The whole jury in my case was contaminated by the action of juror number five, who falsely accused my lead attorney, a Harvard graduate, of making a drug deal with a witness who had just got off the stand in the courthouse parking lot. Attorneys Elliott Hall and Hugh Davis both took the stand and hammered the prosecutor Gerry Vigansky and the judge Alfred Butzbaugh who were working as a team. I was called to the stand and told the crowd the whole jury was contaminated, by the juror, who falsely accused my attorney Hugh Davis of making a drug deal. I said I felt anger and pain. I asked, "How can I explain this to my children?"

There were almost twenty constitutional violations by the Berrien County courthouse during my trial. One impor-



Rev. Pinkney (right).

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

tant violation, the right to a public trial, was taken away by the Judge when he decided to lock out the public. The public had to view the selection of the jury on an 18" inch computer monitor. You could not see any faces of the jury and the monitor was down over 50% of the time. My wife Dorothy Pinkney, Belinda Brown, and Pastor Mary Gault all testified. IT WAS A SLAM DUNK ! Prosecutor Gerry Vigansky placed two false affidavits in his answer to our motion for a new trial from two Berrien County Courthouse employees. We told the prosecutor to put them on the stand under oath but Prosecutor Vigansky withdrew his two false affidavits. We challenged prosecutorial misconduct by Vigansky, his threatening, and coercing of witnesses, concealing and falsifying evidence and twisting the truth.

If we the people, want to defeat our common enemy, we must become more effective than they are. This is a fight against the corporations that have taken over our government. It involves the people throughout the state and nation who are daily losing their jobs and livelihood. The criminals at the core of the Berrien County courthouse have built their criminal empire on strategic and operational goals and plans that date back as far as late 1920s. We must become more effective. Let's talk.

BENTON HARBOR RESIDENTS SPEAK OUT

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of contact, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. *Joe Davis*

We are just one more 9/11 away from being a slaves again. *Milton Barnes*

When a cause come along and you know in your bones that it is just, yet you refuse to defend it at the moment you begin to die and I have never seen so many corpses walking around talking about justice. *Rev. D. Smith*

We the people in Benton Harbor, Michigan are just one Jack Nicklaus golf course from being slaves again. *Doug B.*

The mere imparting of information is not education. Above all things, the effort must result in making a man think and do for himself. *Dorothy Pinkney*

When citizens and seniors in Benton Harbor have a civil or criminal problem, they are not being considered or protected by law enforcement—the people that were put in position to represent us. We are unfairly treated when we ask for help. We're not being allowed to put complaints in. The city managers and the commissioners could stop anything. There is some sort of sell out. *Mary Carter*



Spectators at the Pinkney trial (above).

Below right, a march in support of Pinkney.

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